



THE LIBERATOR

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LIBERAL ARTS COUNCIL
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN | **OCTOBER 8, 2012** | ISSUE 5

THE

2012

ELECTION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

OCTOBER 2012

FEATURES

04 Student Org Spotlight:
University Democrats +
College Republicans

05 Professor Spotlight:
Dr. Eric McDaniel

16 Academic Affairs
Hosts Presidential Panel

NEWS

03 The Good, Bad, and Ugly:
Biased News Consumption

08 Money Matters:
How the Future POTUS will
affect the cost of Education

17 Liberal Arts Week
You Know You're in LA When...

OPINION

Essay Winner
America the Perennial

The Slacker :
Real Talk, Both Parties Blow

Finance Facts:
How Much do you Really Know
About Political Spending?

ENTERTAINMENT

Keep Austin Engaged
Political Events in ATX

Presidential Punchline:
Where to Get Your Laughs
to Keep from Crying

First Ladies of Fashion

How to throw the Ultimate
Election Watching Party

ON THE COVER **10-12** | 2012 Election : Where We Stand



5, 8, 9 Photos by Madhu Singh



On the Cover

Texas Capitol photographed
by Madhu Singh

THE ELECTION ISSUE

The College of Liberal Arts embraces varied perspectives and respects the different ideologies and traditions that inform our culture. With departments in government, economics, history, philosophy, and cultural studies, our college seeks to provide a well-rounded education that addresses the foundations of social development.

As *THE LIBERATOR*, we seek to promote the same ideals in our publication. Our mission has always been to keep students connected, so it was an easy decision to focus our first issue of the year on 2012 Election. Many of the students in our college are studying issues directly related to both platforms, and every student at the

university has a stake in the future of this nation. We knew the best way to serve the student body was demystify issues, educate the reader, and entertain them with facets of politics oftentimes unnoticed.

Our staff was committed to fair reporting and coverage that ran the gamut of all things presidential. It is our hope that, in reading this issue, you learn something new about a candidate, an issue, or even a fashion designer. We hope this issue inspires reflection and discussion for you, so that you can make an informed decision come November.

■ CASSIE MANEEN + CHEYENNE SMITH

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Love it? Hate it? Let us know! Letters to the editor reviewing articles from this issue will be printed in the next edition of *THE LIBERATOR*.

THE LIBERATOR is the official publication of The Liberal Arts Council. As a liberal arts-focused news magazine, we aim to keep students connected to the university through updates on legislation, campus affairs and student life. All questions, comments and concerns can be directed to THE LIBERATOR at:

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THE GOOD, BAD & UGLY

BIAS IN NEWS SOURCES

Media sources dissect and display information around the clock, spicing it up with their own interpretations. Raw information is a rare dish in modern media, but the spice added to it – the bias – might have more of an impact on voters than the actual content produced.

Some people prefer the coverage of CNN, while others dislike its infatuation with gadgets. Some prefer the conservative clamor of Fox News, while others call it hot air. Everyone has a bias they project onto the media. But even if a media source attempted to eliminate any potential bias, it may be unavoidable.

BIASED SOURCES

“Because the media is constrained by time,” Government Professor Tasha Philpot said, “they have to be biased – they have to pick and choose what to cover, so even without an ideological bent, there’s going to be bias in a sense that someone has to make a decision on what’s important, and that decision alone introduces bias in what the media covers.”

But why are some news sources entirely biased, taking information and molding it to fit whatever slant they like? Some sources are so polarized, their differing interpretations of election coverage are like a political seesaw. That bias is also there for a particular reason – because that’s what the audience expects and agrees with.

“People can choose which sources best fit their frame of mind, their ideological spin,” Professor Philpot said, “So it’s not as if people who watch Fox News are not predisposed

to agree with what Fox News says. They’re interested in politics and interested in that way of viewing things, and they’re not going to be motivated in a particular way anymore than they would if they had not been watching Fox News.”

“Because the media is constrained by time, they have to be biased – they have to pick and choose what to cover, so...there’s going to be bias in a sense that someone has to make a decision on what’s important, and that decision alone introduces bias in what the media covers.”

SATIRICAL NEWS

While most news sources seem to be informative and molded to fit ideologies, others have arisen that present the same information in a different, comedic format. John Stewart and Stephen Colbert, known for their satirical critique of the American political scene, act as a filter for political knowledge that many people regularly go to for a laugh. But their credibility may not necessarily be intact.

“These are primarily comedy programs, not credible news sources,” Communications Professor Talia Stroud

said, “but that is not to say that they have no effects on audiences. These programs can help people to learn a few facts about politics. Further, some research suggests that watching these programs increases people’s attention to news, yet their primary mission is not to provide credible news and information to the public.”

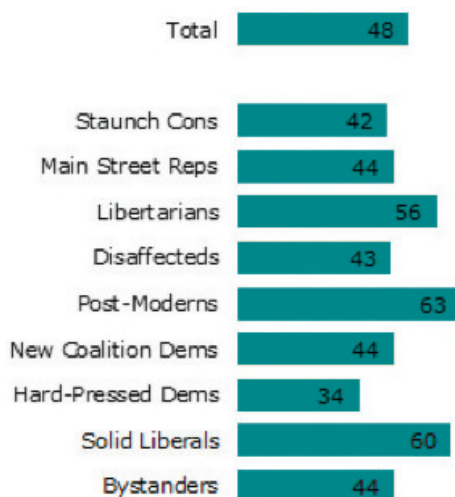
SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media, something relatively new on the campaign playing field, has thrown a fast ball to politicians who now realize having an online presence is critical to any campaign. When a person likes or follows a politician, they become a part of their online environment, and that presence can influence their day to day train of thought, creating a cognitive shift that just may influence the election in November.

“The point of social media in politics is just to be in your face constantly, to just bug you about it,” said Cheyenne Matthews-Hoffman, a Journalism major and digital development intern with Obama For America (OFA), “to have a permanent presence so you’re constantly getting the same information. To put it in your brain, so this is what you should do. It might make a small shift in voter turnout, especially among younger people. But in elections to come, especially since the Internet is kind of new to elections, it’ll probably improve. Candidates will find different ways and strategies to get people to vote. This election is more of a stepping stone to that.”

■ BY HARRISON DROMGOOLE

SOCIAL NETWORK AS A NEWS SOURCE



NEWS SOURCES BY PARTY AFFILIATION

	Total	Solid Liberals	Hard-Pressed Dems	New Coalition Dems	Post-Moderns	Disaffecteds	Libertarians	Main Street Reps	Staunch Cons	By-standers
% who regularly read, watch or listen to...	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Network news	43	38	61	47	38	52	35	51	30	35
Fox News	30	11	35	31	20	40	38	37	54	17
CNN	24	27	44	28	27	29	15	21	8	16
MSNBC	16	19	23	20	15	19	13	18	6	10
NPR	16	34	6	25	20	10	17	11	8	6
Daily newspaper	46	51	57	34	47	49	50	55	44	24
The NY Times	6	18	3	8	10	3	1	4	1	4
The Daily Show	8	21	8	3	14	3	3	3	1	6
Glenn Beck	6	1	5	6	1	5	9	8	23	1
Rush Limbaugh	5	2	1	4	1	4	9	7	21	1

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2011 Political Typology, QA18. Bold figures are significantly higher than the national average.

UNIVERSITY DEMOCRATS & COLLEGE REPUBLICANS

A conversation between student leaders

OTHER POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS ON CAMPUS

- American Constitution Society
- Campaign to End the Death Penalty
- Feminist Action Project Conference
- International Socialist Organization
- Policy Organization for Women
- StandOut
- Students for a Sensible Drug Policy
- Texas Freedom Network
- Texas Journal on Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
- Texas Law Democrats
- UT Votes
- Young Americans for Liberty
- Young Conservatives of Texas
- Youth for Ron Paul

*THIS IS NOT A COMPLETE LIST OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Despite the construction in West Campus, or the stale beer left on the sidewalks of Sixth Street, Election 2012 is most noticeably in the air at the University of Texas. The west mall is laden with deputized students urging their peers to get registered, and nearly all tabling has turned to events somehow linked to the presidential election. Two of the most active student organizations in this push towards November are the College Republicans and University Democrats. We met up with the communication directors from each group for a fireside chat, true to the Roosevelt tradition. Sub the fireplace for a seating area in the Student Services Building, and you've essentially got the point.

Andre Treiber, University Democrats representative summarized President Obama's platform saying, "To simplify it, I would say we want to continue rebuilding the economy, and expanding equality; meaning, marriage equality and equality for women." While Danny Zeng, speaking on behalf of the College Republicans laid out Governor Romney's plan, "We want to look long-term, down the road. We haven't seen much progress coming from the 2008 election. We need to strengthen the middle class."

The discussion quickly tapered to issues more

relevant at a public university like the interest rate on student loans, rising cost of tuition, and expansion of federal finance aid. Treiber noted, "Obama just doubled Pell Grants. That seems like a pretty simply, black and white thing to throw out there. He made financing for college much easier in general," he went on to explain that the President's initiative cut out the middle-man by allowing money to flow directly from the government to students, bypassing

"I THINK VOTING IS THE MOST FUNDAMENTALLY AMERICAN THING YOU CAN DO. I THINK YOU SOMEWHAT HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY, BUT EVEN IF YOU DIDN'T, YOU SHOULD ENJOY EXERCISING YOUR RIGHTS. YOUR VOICE MATTERS, NO MATTER HOW YOUNG OR HOW OLD"

- ANDRE TREIBER

banks. Treiber added, "I cannot think of a better thing for students than to make less barrier of entry, less barrier of participation to higher education."

The pair agreed to the fact that the cost of higher education has skyrocketed at an exponential pace.

Treiber noted that its rise has far surpassed inflation, and Zeng added, "It has gone up since the late 1970's, more than 400%."

Greater than health care cost, greater than inflation, and that's a real concern for a lot of families,

working-class, middle-class families." Zeng went on to offer some concrete solutions to the education crisis, stating "Not everyone needs to go to UT... there are alternative routes for them to do things for themselves and for their families, and we need to look at all our options." He discussed ideas incorporating online blended learning and the potential of part-time colleges for working class families, while stressing the importance of innovation in approaching the changing demands of our world and economy—a sentiment Treiber shared. Zeng advocated, "I think Governor Romney, having worked in a Fortune 500 company, realizes those challenges. He's worked with those issues on China, he's worked with those issues in terms of meeting labor demand, and we believe he will do the right thing with higher education."

Strapped with different political ideologies, both the University Democrats and College Republicans had strategies to rally the troops on campus to show up on Election Day. In addition to plans for a guest speaker series, Treiber and Zeng both mentioned joining forces with Hook the Vote, a student organization coalition encouraging voter registration. "I actually normally have voter registration cards in my backpack, but I used the last one today in class," laughed Treiber, clearly illustrating a hands-on approach in reaching other students.

Ultimately, each representative was sure to emphasize the importance of the youth vote in this election. "We are at a juncture-point where we have to decide where we want the country to head at least the first half of the century. Some of the policies the president is setting down are game-changing. It's big-time fundamental changes to the system, and we need to focus on those topics," Zeng said. Treiber added, "I think voting is the most fundamentally American thing you can do. I think you somewhat have a responsibility, but even if you didn't, you should enjoy exercising your rights. Your voice matters, no matter how young or how old." ■ BY CASSIE MANEEN

Photo by Madhu Singh

Professor Spotlight:

Only during election year where two prominent political leaders compete for the Presidency do people launch themselves into a flurry of ever-growing excitement and suspense. The bustle of 2012 is infectious and heightened by the injection of religious discourse into the political arena. Tensions are higher than ever as arguments of whether or not issues such as same-sex marriage and abortion can reconcile with religion.

“There is still a kind of attempt to frame things in a religious way,” claims Professor Eric McDaniel, an associate professor in the Department of Government who specializes in African American religious institutions and their relationship with politics. “I think religion is still a key ‘component’ of campaigns,” he continues to say while noting the extensive reference to Scripture during both the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. Former Ohio Governor Ted Strickland’s reiteration of a verse in Matthew 6:21, which states, “the scriptures teach us that where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,” comes to mind, as does Grant Bennett’s reference to a quote from James 1:27 in the New Testament.

Dr. McDaniel earned his Ph. D in Political Science from the University of Illinois before joining the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin, where he now teaches a course on the role of churches and politics in the African American community. Having surveyed and studied the involvement of politically active churches throughout his career, Dr. McDaniel’s analysis and knowledge of the United States Government is vast. In his view, although the

government’s enormousness is intimidating, people should not discourage themselves from negotiating with or transforming the government. Yet,



Dr. Eric McDaniel

“I hope to put forth a more holistic understanding of how belief systems shape personal behavior, policy attitudes, and interactions between individuals.”

amidst the political commotion, voter apathy and a general disregard for the “toxicity” of politics diminish the desire to involve oneself in the election year uproar. “Government is not as difficult as people make it out to be,” Dr. McDaniel asserts. After attending his class, one might agree. After all, Professor McDaniel’s aspiration is to mold his students into effective thinkers who can detect and understand patterns while upholding their professionalism. He admits that his students are responsible for a large amount of work, but that their input and critical

thinking are necessary in analyzing political events and relationships that will allow them to become more successful—especially in the realm of politics. Dr. McDaniel stresses, “By being politically informed, you can actually find ways to defend your interests.” One person’s interests could be lower taxes, more health benefits, or the right to marry whomever he or she loves. The hot topic of another’s could be heavily influenced by religion.

And, given that the United States is one of the most religious nations in the West, politics and religion are almost inseparable. In fact, some of the most

significant elections have been flooded with religious discourse. Dr. McDaniel offers the election of 1960 in which John F. Kennedy’s Catholicism was scrutinized—sometimes with disdain and distrust. Years later, Barack Obama’s religion was questioned by people who accused him of being a Muslim. This year’s election has introduced a torrent of suspicion onto Mitt Romney’s Mormonism. Furthermore, Romney’s Catholic running-mate Paul Ryan is criticized for actions that contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Religion and politics by themselves evoke controversy, but when combined they can amplify firestorms. Luckily, the University of Texas at Austin has a professor who can endure the heat while maintaining utmost professionalism. Dr. McDaniel continues to analyze the relationship between religious organizations and politics, delving into the profound intricacies of two integral and evocative institutions. “To overall academia, I hope to put forth a more holistic understanding of how belief systems shape personal behavior, policy attitudes, and interactions between individuals,” Dr. McDaniel affirms. The critical thinking capabilities necessary to analyze arguments are some of the traits that Professor McDaniel hopes his students will inherit and continue to sharpen as they become integrated into pivotal political events. Such skills ensure they remain standing in the heat of a system that fuses religion and politics. ■ ELIE WU



PHOTOS BY MADHU SINGH

“BY BEING POLITICALLY INFORMED, YOU CAN ACTUALLY FIND WAYS TO DEFEND YOUR INTERESTS”

THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU VOTE

★ ELECTION ★ ACTIVITIES IN & AROUND ATX

Both the Republican and Democratic Party platforms have been outlined, with top leaders in both parties advocating for the election of their candidate. Fundraising for both the Obama and Romney campaigns has been extensive and the polls are being closely watched in the key swing states. Depending on your party alignment, a lot is riding on this election in terms of immigration, healthcare and our ever fickle economy. If you are undecided at the moment, that's alright. There is still plenty of time, and plenty of events, to help you become educated on the key issues and platforms of each candidate before you go out and vote. ■ ARIEL FLORES

★ ON CAMPUS ★

The University of Texas has followed suit, as there will be many events held for students on campus to get ready for Nov. 6th. On Oct. 21st at Gregory Plaza, the Student Government sponsored organization Hook the Vote will be hosting VOTERAMA!, along with the University Democrats and College Republicans. All partner organizations of Hook the Vote will be tabling across campus to register students from 10-4 pm. At night, a rally with free food, t-shirts, guest speakers and live entertainment will be held in celebration. Students from all the partnering organizations will be using this time as an opportunity to raise awareness about early voting. These student leaders will be setting the example for their peers by casting their votes on the first day of early voting—Oct. 22nd. Hook the Vote will engage students further by hosting a live debate between representatives from both the University Democrats and College Republicans, on Oct. 14th. The agency will be utilizing their social media outlets, and encourage students to actively participate in these mock debates by tweeting their questions, so representatives address those issues most important to UT students.

★ LOCAL EVENTS ★

Locally, there are many things going on in the Austin area. On Oct. 10th, KXAN, at the Long Center for Performing Arts, will be hosting a live town hall meeting that will help get the city of Austin informed on the issues and candidates. The panel will include speakers like Council Member Sheryl Cole and Ross Ramsey, Executive Director of The Texas Tribune, and tickets will be available online through Leadership Austin. Additionally, the Travis County Democratic Party will host fundraising events for the Obama campaign on Oct. 16th and Oct. 25th at Mayor Pro Temp Cole's House on Wildwood Rd and at the Historic Victory Grill on East 11th St. Every Thursday of this month, the Travis County Republican Party will host a fundraising event for Mitt Romney's campaign through a phone bank at their headquarters on Cameron Rd. A social event will be held after each phone bank ends. All of these opportunities provide a great chance to get involved, not only with local campaigns, but with the community overall. The town hall debate is sure to address a wide range of topics that affects everyone. The local events will also prove to be a good way for like minded people to gather in support of their candidate as Election Day draws closer.

★ DEBATES ★

Election season is nothing if not interesting. Gatherings for political parties, meetings for discussion of the issues, and last minute campaigning will rule the month of October. Formal debates of the issues will take place and be televised until the end of the month. The vice presidential debate between Vice President Joe Biden and Representative Paul Ryan will take place on Oct. 11th from 8:00- 9:30 pm central in which both will go toe to toe on foreign and domestic issues. The second presidential debate between President Obama and Governor Mitt Romney will take place on Oct. 16th from 8:00-9:30 pm and will be in the form of a town hall meeting. The last presidential debate before voters go to the polls will be on Oct. 22nd and will focus on foreign policy issues exclusively. All debates will be aired live on all major news and cable channels, such as ABC, MSNBC, Fox News, and CNN. For those who may not be near a T.V. at these times, the debates will also be streaming online. The debates should prove to be interesting, and provide great access to the issues for undecided voters. These moments, historically, have become hallmarks of presidential elections. The format of these events provides invaluable insight, as the candidates are able to advocate on behalf of themselves.

DON'T MISS OUT:

10.14	DEBATE BETWEEN UNIVERSITY DEMOCRATS AND COLLEGE REPUBLICANS
10.21	VOTORAMA!
10.22	EARLY VOTING

10.10	TOWN HALL MEETING
10.11	FUNDRAISING EVENTS FOR
18&25	THE ROMNEY CAMPAIGN
10.16	FUNDRAISING EVENTS FOR
&25	THE OBAMA CAMPAIGN

10.11	VICE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE
	ON FOREIGN AND
	DOMESTIC ISSUES
10.16	2ND PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE
10.22	FINAL PRESIDENTIAL
	DEBATE

AMERICA THE PERENNIAL

How would a liberal arts education influence your personal platform for the presidency of the United States?

Sometimes people scoff when I mention my liberal arts major.

They smirk at my job prospects. Other times they look at me, impressed by the difficulty of my course material. Neither reaction is better than the other. I didn't get a liberal arts degree to make people react. I got one because I wanted to learn more and think critically. In that, I gained a contextually deep understanding of America and learned to think with analytical breadth, considering the viewpoints of all people. In pushing me towards that greater understanding, my liberal arts education has given me a better sense of empathy. It's that empathy and rich understanding of America that will aid me in the development of my platform for the presidency of the United States.

Perhaps the most important part of analyzing policies is the ability to look beyond the paper and into the lives of the people that your policies affect. The humanities force you to do that. When you look at perspectives of Europeans meeting Native Americans, or the stoning of young women in Salem, Massachusetts, you gain a deeper comprehension by putting yourself in those experiences. Oscar Wilde's "Picture of Dorian Gray" becomes so much more real when you put yourself in the shoes of Dorian and Basil Hallward. It becomes even more real when you put yourself inside the head of Oscar Wilde himself. From this, my liberal

arts education would give that ability to truly identify the citizens that would be affected by my policies as President. The business owners who my tax laws affect. The LGBT individuals whose statuses in America are reliant upon my decisions. The family that has defaulted on their mortgage payments and since moved in with a relative. Liberal arts has taught me that when I develop my platform for these Americans, I need to understand their plights and truly make an effort to empathize with them before I make decisions. Moreover it has shown me how to empathize with them. That understanding of other perspectives will greatly influence my platform in that I will look to the stories of the people who my decisions affect, not just statistics or a distant analysis. People aren't numbers. Accordingly, they shouldn't be treated like them.

Understanding the full context of America is something else that liberal arts has given me that will undoubtedly affect my platform as President of The United States. I've flown to California, but it was Steinbeck who took me out west in an over-packed truck and then showed me pure evil in the Salinas Valley. I've learned about the American South, but it was William Faulkner and Mark Twain who sent me tramping around the Mississippi River and gave me a true understanding of it. I've spent years poring over the Constitution and Bill of Rights learning about the foundation of America, but it was in my Philosophy classes that I came to understand those foundations while reading the likes of Aristotle, Plato, and Locke. My liberal arts education would influence my platform for presidency in my understanding of America that breathes depth and not just quantitative



Photo by Madhu Singh

Ali Breland
Junior,
Plan II and
Philosophy

I've flown to California, but it was Steinbeck who took me out west in an over-packed truck and then showed me pure evil in the Salinas Valley. I've learned about the American South, but it was William Faulkner and Mark Twain who sent me tramping around the Mississippi River and gave me a true understanding of it.

knowledge. I would be able to support policies and make decisions on behalf of the US that don't represent snapshot

of America in the two years around my campaign, but represent America in the full continuum of its existence. It's in the understanding of what is and what was that can help us plan for the road ahead, a more than a suitable tenant for a presidential platform.

America is not just a nation right now. It was been one for a long time and will continue to be one for a long time. It has always been so much richer than what was visible on its surface. It's people and its spirit, perennial with freedom, law, and love are more than what a statistic or quick glance gives way to. Walt Whitman taught me that in liberal arts. It's a cognizance of these things that I have gained from liberal arts that will influence my platform for the presidency of the United States of America.

MONEY MATTERS

PICTURE FROM CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG

WITH THE MYRIAD OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES THROWN AROUND, IT'S EASY TO SEE HOW THE QUESTION OF COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY COULD GET LOST ALONG THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Neither Obama nor Romney has spent much time addressing it, but with 71% of University of Texas students and about two-thirds of students across the nation accepting federal financial aid, it seems like it should be brought to the forefront. University students are graduating with \$20,000 in student loans on average, and that's before many decide to further their degrees.

Melody Karsi, a 3rd year Biology major, sums up a universal concern among students, "I feel really scared. I'm afraid I'm not going to be able to find a job that will give me the freedom other adults have because I'll be stuck paying off debt."

"I feel really scared. I'm afraid I'm not going to be able to find a job that will give me the freedom other adults have because I'll be stuck paying off debt."

With the economy only just beginning to climb to its original grandeur and jobs being a hot button

topic, students are left feeling uncertain about their futures. This election could decide the future of many things, including where these students end up and what will happen to their debt.

OBAMA'S PLAN

President Obama's plans center around making education more affordable. Based on his platform, he aims to increase the credibility of community colleges, making them more illustrious to students who do not want to pay for a larger, and more expensive, state school, but who also do not want to forfeit the quality of education. As for students going to a more prestigious school, he advocates for continuing tax credits that allow families to write off students still in school. Federal funding is also being pushed to help students before they accrue debt. One of the most important factors to note is Obama's plan for Student Loan reform, known as "Pay As You Earn". His campaign promises that a student, no matter the amount of debt the graduate with, will pay a monthly amount based solely on the income they receive from the job they

have undertaken post-graduation. They will continue to pay a monthly bill based on income until they have paid off their loan, despite how long it takes.

ROMNEY'S PLAN

In contrast to Obama's proposals, the Romney-Ryan campaign pushes for a more practical higher-education experience. Similar to the housing crisis in which many people paid for homes they could not afford by taking out loans, they reject the idea of excessive student loans for schools normally out of a student's price range. Instead, Romney advocates choosing a school whose price tag matches the student's budget. A four-year University should not be required if it means hindering future opportunities. In this case, a community college degree could provide the same job, but more freedom later as opposed to the same student graduating from a four-year school. Higher collegiate learning is not always the answer either, according to their campaign. They are also pushing to dive into the private

sector and focus on more specialized schools, which are becoming increasingly popular.

Student debt cannot be ignored. It is a bill that must be paid at some point. New laws have been recently passed to prevent even a graduate who declares bankruptcy to be free of their loans. It is, now, an almost unavoidable hindrance on the futures of many well-meaning Americans. This is not legislation that only affects current students, however. Anyone with children looking toward higher education has reason for concern. At the very least, both candidates see a way to end the cycle of obtrusive student debt and hope to do so. It is all a matter of how each of them chooses to go about it.

■ PATTY SANGER

Current projections for the 2013-2014 student loan interest rates are

Projected Stafford Loan: 1.79%

Projected Stafford Loan: 2.39%

Projected PLUS Loan: 3.19%

www.finaid.org

\$21,175

THE AVERAGE AMOUNT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ENTERING REPAYMENT PROGRAMS OWE AFTER GRADUATING FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

WWW.SIMPLETUITION.COM



BOTH PARTIES

BLOW

Disclaimer: I am not a politician or economist. I'm not an aspiring Fox News or MSNBC contributor. I don't have a thorough understanding of the American political system, nor a solid grasp on issues. And

I'm certainly not your Facebook friend who thinks they're well informed, and decides to raise awareness by sharing random crap to complain about how oppressive the world is.

Romney and Obama, unlike the previous presidential candidates who suspiciously ignored me till I turned eighteen, are fighting over me. They both crave my vote because I'm delicious. While their hors d'œuvre was the right and left wings of the metaphorical eagle that is the American political spectrum, they're now fighting for the breast. I'm a part of that juicy, tender middle that everyone wants a piece of. Sharing is a taxing task that neither enjoy (although Romney might), but Mother Democracy demands it. Unfortunately, I'm dissatisfied with both candidates' table manners – Romney because he's a business and political vulture who takes whatever he can get, and Obama because I'm interested in humble diners, not celebrities or borderline demigods. I won't even mention the Libertarians. They sit at the kids' table.

So how does one person determine the fate of a nearly 250 year old nation? All the doomsayers claim this is the MOST IMPORTANT ELECTION EVER. But with the knowledge of a third grader's standard American education, I think I can put a dent in this political prophecy by stating that George Washington was our first president, and there's a thing called checks and balances. And I'm talking about the checks and balances on our branches of government, not the financial ones purchasing both party's chances at election.

Did you know that if you rearrange the word "bipartisan" you come up with "abstain" and "RIP"? That is to say, the word meaning "refrain from voting," and the phrase "rest in peace," are inherent within our political fabric. Coincidence? No. The system is doomed and I can hear George Washington rolling in his grave.

I'm sure 250 year old eagle meat tastes disgusting. They're bald eagles after all. America needs something new, a fresh party represented by something truly progressive, something I'd want to chew on during a festive red, white and blue barbeque. Chicken, while cheap and common like so many democracies of the present world, is associated with timidity and bores me. While it's certainly an American treasure that flows fried through our fast food chains, the new symbol must be unique and liberating, yet just as American.

Much like America's diversity and regality, a peacock could be a suitable representation with its majestic colors and cocky swagger. But there's a flaw with the peacock that contradicts the beliefs of this new party. Have you seen a female peacock? Mother Nature has some feminine rivalry issues, because those chicks got dealt a bad hand. They're

ugly in comparison to the males and lack any sort of glory or power. No progressive party would seriously allow itself to be represented by a bird that treats its women like ugly ducklings. No, our women are strong, independent and beautiful. A war on women is the last thing to support.

How about Flamingos? Nothing screams USA better than a plastic flamingo gracefully adorning a lawn during the glistening sunrise of an American morning. And that gorgeous pink plumage! Even with such beauty, the flamingo demonstrates its fierceness in its fabulous, sassy strut and condescending composure. It may very well be a fitting symbol of progressivism, including the elderly who so fondly remember the pink flamingo lawn ornament as a pop culture icon. However, there is a fundamental flaw with the flamingo – it lacks courage and power. Other birds literally kill and eat flamingos just for the fun of it. America is not a nation of weak, shaky prey.

I think Benjamin Franklin was right. He's on the hundred dollar bill for a reason, and he said we needed to be represented by turkeys. Sure, male turkeys are adorned with a more majestic plumage, but they're absolutely hideous compared to the grace of a female. Both male and female are equally obnoxious, aggressive, loud, and proud. Yes, the headstrong, courageous turkey that crossed the road and didn't give a damn. A new party, a party rooted in Thanksgiving, America's first dinner party, and, to quote Mr. Franklin, represented by the "Bird of Courage."

And we shall be named the Drumstick Party. We march to the drum of freedom.

■ THE SLACKER

A N H Y F T K M D C Z N T I K
Q F Y M M O A M O O P G N M B
R E F Z U P V R O A R I Y P N
E E W A A D R D I S I A E E N
T O W T I I S R H W V P M A I
K S H O D R E L B Y A M A C K
L Y I O P T S L I M C A G H T
X S R Y S V T X U N Y C T M V
T S R Y B E M A L B G C T E R
Y C H S V B T Y Q A X I S N W
U M S X T H O B R I E Y N T X
S C A N D A L L I J B U F G K
H Y F E U L F A Y G I J A W C
M V G S L Q Y T M J I V L D O
E C N E U L F F A W M V E F G

AFFAIRS
AFFLUENCE
APATHY
BLAME
CAMPAIGN

CORRIDORS
GAME
HYSTERIA
IMPEACHMENT
LOBBYIST

MUDSLINGING
POWER
PRIVACY
SCANDAL

THE SLACKER WANT'S YOU

HERE'S WHERE THE DRUMSTICK PARTY STANDS ON THE ISSUES... IF YOU'RE INTO THAT SORT OF THING

MARRIAGE

You're probably going to get divorced anyway, so who cares?

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

We can always ask China to help us

HEALTHCARE

Citizens who pay into our retirement program will be granted a voucher good for one whole condominium in the Florida Keys

ENVIRONMENT

Al Gore lost to Bush for a reason

EDUCATION

We are prepared to bribe teachers from countries with top education systems to teach here in the land of opportunity



WHO WE ARE WHAT WE BELIEVE

ELECTION 2012

One of the great things about attending a school with 50,000 students is that there is rarely a moment when everyone nods their heads and says, 'I agree.' During election years our differences are magnified and the debates are heated. However, one thing remains consistent: students believe that their peers should be voting; the difference comes in who they are voting for.

"I think students should always exercise their right to vote," junior Sara Benner said. "It's one that many take for granted, and many people shrug it off like it's something unimportant. But the way I see it, you either vote and make your opinion documented, or you hand over your power to someone else."

However, even though most students agree that they should be voting, a large percent of them never make it to the booth. "Realistically I do think that students should vote," senior Brendan McDonnell said. "Who runs the country will affect present and future issues that are facing their generation. Then again I'm apathetic with fierce opinions... that I won't do anything about."

COULDN'T CARE LESS

"Realistically I do think that students should vote. Who runs the country will affect present and future issues that are facing their generation. Then again I'm apathetic with fierce opinions... that I won't do anything about."

Brendan McDonnell

Historically, young voters have never been known to rush the booths in great numbers. The all-time highest youth turnout was 55.4 percent in 1972, the first year that 18-year-olds could vote in a presidential election. The 2008 election saw the second highest turnout of young voters, somewhere between 49.3 and 54.5 percent, according to an exit poll analysis released by CIRCLE, a nonpartisan research center at Tufts University.

"What we know is Americans don't like to participate in politics very much," professor Sean Theriault said. "2008 was off the charts [for young voter turnout]. Of course, the not off the charts again, but that doesn't mean they've gone down to the 1996 or 2000 level."

Still, the big question remains: How do we get young people to vote?

"I think in 2008 Barack Obama convinced [young voters] that they had a real stake in the election," Theriault said. "We talk much more about loans and jobs [after graduation] than we did before. So, hopefully young people recognize that this election is in part about them. If they don't let their voices be heard it means other groups who vote with greater numbers are the ones that draw all the attention and get all the policies."

So while the candidates continuously are trying to excite their base and convince students they can truly play a role in their future, there are those who do care about politics and are already passionate about voting and knowing what's going on in the world.

"If students care about affording the rising costs of tuition, having a job when they graduate, and securing access to affordable and quality healthcare, then they need to come out and vote," Huey Rey Fischer, president of the University Democrats, said.

Although UT is generally known as a liberal school, there are of course republicans who are just as eager to get

TO THE BOOTH!

"If students care about affording the rising costs of tuition, having a job when they graduate, and securing access to affordable and quality healthcare, then they need to come out and vote"

Huey Rey Fischer

students and their peers out to vote for their side.

"For young Republicans it is important [to vote] because there is a myth that all young people are Democrats," junior Taylor Guerrero said "I think it is important that we show the country we are here and we are going to show up at the polls and make our voices heard."

Of course, with 50,000 students one can expect to find more than just democrats and republicans.

"The libertarian party has a very credible candidate," said José Alberto Niño, president of Longhorn Libertarians. "It's crucial that people look at him and look at his platform and ultimately vote for him because he offers an alternative to the two party duopoly that exists right now."

While the varying of viewpoints of the issues are, of course, what divides parties, young voters at UT can feel united in knowing that they all care most passionately about the same issues.

"Education is an economic, cultural and security issue," Fischer said. "We need to invest in our future fully. That means supporting young people from Pre-K to college."

YOU CAN'T VOTE IF YOU DON'T REGISTER DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 9, 2012 MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

WHERE WE STAND

Benner agrees that “the most important issue at stake here is education. We’ve been cutting it back for the last decade, with great detriment to our society’s future growth.”

Most also agree that, despite dramatic events taking place overseas, foreign policy will not play a large roll in this election.

“There are other concerns that Americans care more about,” Theriault said. “I don’t think Obama is denying what’s happening is happening, but times are tough here so it’s hard for us to vote one way or another on how we feel about a Syrian dictator versus, ‘are we either having positive job growth or are we above 8% unemployment?’”

However, there is, again, always another way to look at the world.

“I think [the violence overseas] will wake people up to vote on the libertarian side,” said Niño. “All this violence is erupting due to the many, many years the establishment has followed a straight interventionist foreign policy platform.”

Interestingly enough, self-proclaimed apathetic McDonnell said, “America is so obsessed with immigration, gay marriage, abortion... and anything else that is dichotic in nature between conservative types and liberals. They’re obsessed with these things because they can get real mad at them and have fun with others doing so.”

Of course, those who don’t go out of their way to follow the news or policies going through government are most likely to hear only the issues talked about most through the media.

So while most students have already decided not to vote or who they are going to vote for, there are some out there who are truly undecided.

“[In order] for Obama, [to convince me to vote for him, he needs] to show me that he has made changes that are already in effect or will be shortly. Romney needs to convince me he’s in touch with the reality of the needs of a median income family, rather than the ultra-wealthy super elite.”

For those who are unconvinced, it may be beyond the presidential

debates to change their mind.

“I do plan on watching the debates, but I’m mildly apathetic to what they will talk about,” Benner said. “Ultimately, whatever they say is just talk... I’m just waiting for the talk to stop and action to begin.”

President Obama and Governor Romney squared off in the first presidential debate and battled over taxes, deficits and job creation, among other things. Both candidates talked extensively about the weak economy and unemployment as expected.

“Jobs, jobs and jobs. That’s the thing that matters,” Theriault said. “The only difference between the democrats and the republicans is the lens through which they want us to view the job numbers.”

And after all the talk, it seems what people found most interesting about the Oct. 3 debate was – the moderator.

“I’m not going to say I’ve done a poor job...” moderator Jim Lehrer said, assessing the performance on his part in the debate.

However, by the end of the debate Lehrer had to apologize for how much time had been lost and twitter reviews ranged from: “Big losers of the night: Big Bird, Jim Lehrer, women,” and “[he] shoulda ended the debate with, ‘Thank you and I’m sorry.’”

Stand-up comedian Bill Maher was another one among many who summed up his thoughts on the debate in the ever popular 140 characters: “my rating: Romney won the debate, Obama had the facts on his side, and Lehrer sucked. Next debate, get @SethMacFarlane to host!”

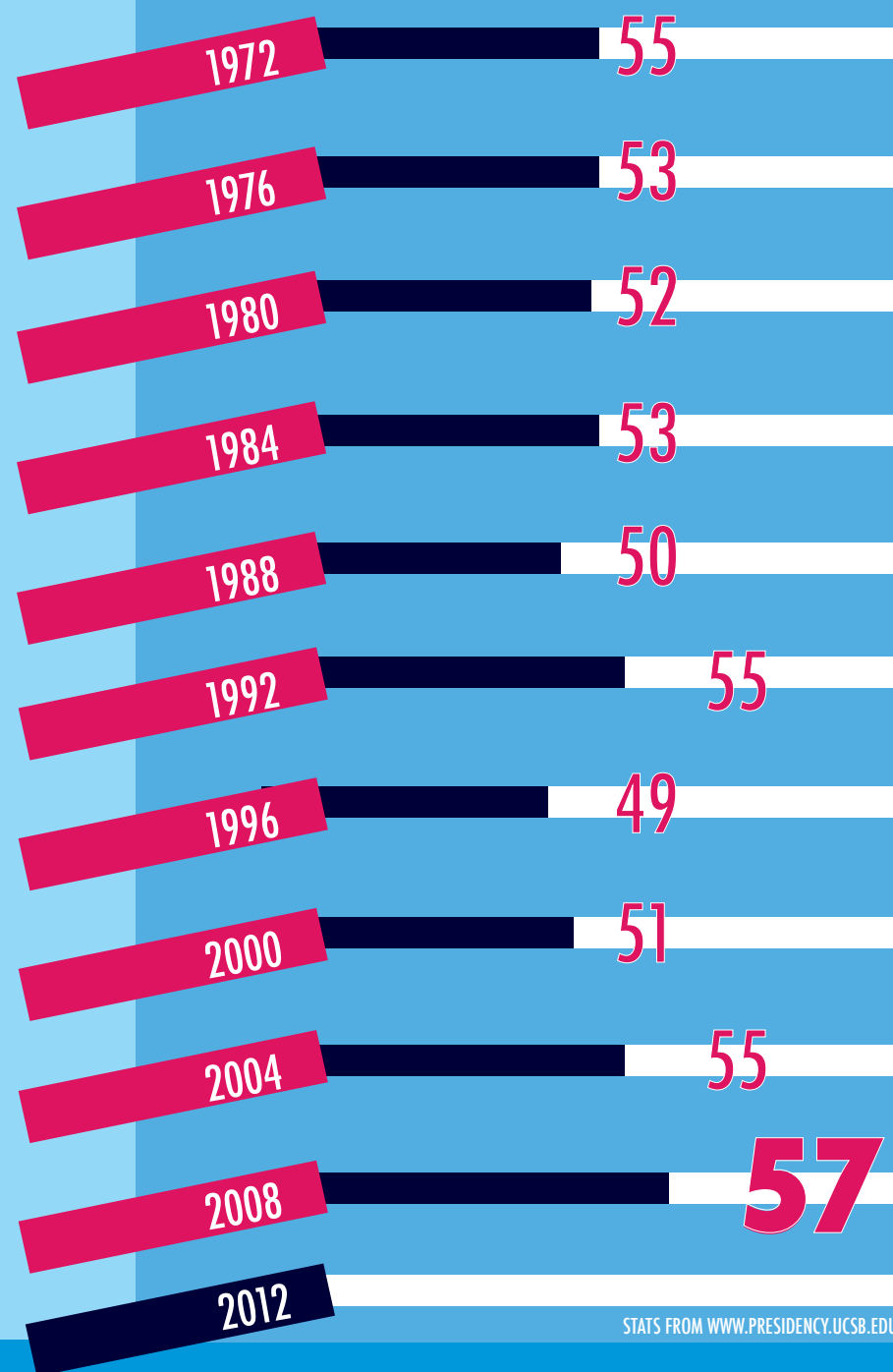
■ RACHEL MARINO

ON THE FENCE

“[In order] for Obama, [to convince me to vote for him, he needs] to show me that he has made changes that are already in effect or will be shortly. Romney needs to convince me he’s in touch with the reality of the needs of a median income family, rather than the ultra-wealthy super elite.”

Sara Benner

TURN OUT PERCENTAGE FOR PEOPLE OF VOTING AGE BY ELECTION



STATS FROM WWW.PRESIDENCY.UCSB.EDU

ARE YOU STILL ON THE FENCE?

HERE ARE A FEW BLACK AND WHITE ISSUES THAT CAN HELP DETERMINE WHICH PARTY YOU WANT IN POWER

It is the right of all families to share equal respect, responsibility and protection under the law. Laws or constitutional amendments discriminating against, or denying equal protection to same-sex couples, are opposed. The Defense of Marriage Act should be repealed and replaced by the Respect for Marriage Act. Religious entities are entitled to decide on their own administration of marriage without government interference.

Stand behind Obamacare and continue to improve the current legislation. Invest in the public health infrastructure and end insurance discrimination to ensure all Americans have access to affordable healthcare, even those with pre-existing conditions. Medicare should not be privatized. It should be strengthened in order to improve care, fraud prevention, and benefits. Strengthen Medicaid, expand access to it, and oppose block-granting the program.

Easy access to women's health services, contraception, and family planning are all resources that should be provided to women of the United States. Women have control of their bodies and reproductive choices. In the event that they require it, women should be able to seek out a safe and legal abortion. This is a very personal and private decision in which government and politics play no role. Women also deserve equal pay in the workplace and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act is designed to accomplish this. To further the commitment to women, President Obama has created the White House Council on Women and Girls.

The Internet acts as a platform of innovation in today's society and its freedom should be defended. It should be dependable and secure and preserved as the platform it is for expression, assembly, commerce, learning, and more. While the extension of intergovernmental controls is not supported, the protection of U.S. intellectual property and a multi-stakeholder governance approach is. It is important to be respectful of intellectual property, access to a wealth of information, and privacy.

MARRIAGE

The war on marriage refers to conflicts of interest regarding the legality of same-sex marriage and the preservation of marriage in the traditional sense - between a man and a woman.

Marriage is critical to the health and well being of a nation. It is important to preserve the traditional definition of marriage as being between one man and one woman. Legislation such as the Defense of Marriage Act that affirms states' right not to recognize same-sex marriages licensed in other states should be upheld and a Constitutional amendment endorsing the traditional form of marriage should be pursued.

HEALTH CARE

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, represents the most significant overhaul of the American healthcare system since the creation of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965. Obamacare aims to reduce costs of healthcare and expand health insurance to all Americans. Insurance companies will be required to cover all applicants. The controversy arises because some see this as significant, unconstitutional government overreach.

Repeal Obamacare (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act). It is an unconstitutional expansion of government control over our personal healthcare choices and the economy. Reform the healthcare system to empower senior citizens to make their own personal healthcare decisions and prevent it from further contributing to our future debt. The current trajectories of Medicare and Medicaid cannot be sustained. Medicare should be converted from a defined-benefit model to a defined-contribution model. premium-support model in order to limit costs and Medicaid should be turned over to the states.

WOMEN

The war on women refers to the initiatives taken by the Republican Party in federal and state governments to restrict women's rights, especially with regard to reproductive rights and abortion. It expands to include workplace discrimination and equal pay for women.

The war on women does not exist; it is a political strategy employed by democrats to influence women voters. Life begins at conception, which is why the decision in Roe v. Wade should be overturned. The government should not be responsible for funding abortions or abortion advocates, such as Planned Parenthood. Strong family values are important and it is the duty of Americans to protect the sanctity of life and know the difference between personal opinion and the law.

INTERNET

The war on the Internet refers to recent controversy over piracy and what to do about it. Congress tried to pass the Stop Online Piracy Act and the Protect Intellectual Property Act, two controversial anti-piracy bills designed to go after the enablers of online piracy. Strong lobbying from the tech sector and protests from Internet users around the world has resulted in the shelving of both SOPA and PIPA, as they have come to be known.

The right to free speech is protected under the First Amendment and any regulatory barriers to free speech on the Internet are opposed. Removal of outdated regulations that prevent further advancement and innovation with regard to the Internet is supported, as is the multi-stakeholder governance approach. Personal data is guaranteed full constitutional protection from government intervention and individuals retain their right to control third party use of their data.

■ BY DANA HENNING

MONEY IN POLITICS

WHAT YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW, BUT HAVE NO IDEA

“Right now, you can prostitute all of the politicians some of the time, and prostitute some of the politicians all the time, but ... within ten years, every politician in this country will be a prostitute.”
– Keith Olbermann

Unless you live under a rock, have been in a coma for the past sixteen months, or live on a deserted island in the middle of the ocean, you know the US Presidential election is quickly approaching. Even if the above categories do apply to you; I’m still sure candidates have managed to get their message out to you somehow. After all, the \$5.8 billion dropped on the 2012 elections has to go somewhere, right?

That’s right; I said ‘billion’ as in with a capital ‘B’. To put it in popular consumer terms, you could purchase more than 12.5 million iPhone 5’s or 16.9 million Samsung Galaxy S3’s with that kind of change. In any terms, that’s a lot of money. For political junkies, the ultimate question these figures bring to mind is, “Where does it all come from?”

Mainstream popular belief says that as a result of the controversial Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission case decided by the Supreme Court in 2010, the bulk of this money comes from corporate donors through the form of SuperPACs (Political Action Committees). Mainstream popular belief, akin to what Mr. Olbermann said during his January 21 comments on MSNBC’s Countdown, also believes that Citizens United led to corporate funding becoming the greatest source of political donations to candidates and SuperPACs.

Sorry to burst the doomsday political bubble, which sounds more like an Ayn Rand dystopia, but mainstream popular belief is wrong. Here’s why.

Myth 1

Citizen’s United gave corporations the right to unlimited donations to political candidates

A popularly held belief is that Citizens United allowed corporations to donate unlimited amounts of money to political candidates and parties.

Actually, as the Securities and Exchange Commission states, “Corporations and unions are still prohibited from making direct campaign contributions to federal candidates and parties,” even after Citizens United.

The Truth: Corporations and Unions can make unlimited “independent expenditures”.

What Citizens United actually did was reaffirm the right of corporations and unions to spend their money for purposes of free speech. Just as you have the right to spend \$100 writing signs that say ‘Students for Obama’ or ‘Young Americans for Romney’, so do corporations (albeit on a much larger scale). Contrary to popular belief, this isn’t anything new – it was established in 1976 in another Supreme Court case, Buckley v. Valeo; all Citizens United did was remove the limits on ‘independent expenditures’.

As clarified by our friends at the Securities and Exchange Commission, “corporations and unions can now make unlimited expenditures for or against candidates as long as those expenditures are not coordinated with the candidates.”

Myth 2

Citizen’s United established SuperPACs

Most people think that one of the outcomes of Citizens United was the legalization of SuperPACs – guess again.

The Truth: SuperPACs didn’t come along until SpeechNow.org v. Federal Election Commission.

While Citizens United reiterated Buckley v. Valeo’s protections for corporate free speech and allowed for ‘unlimited independent expenditures’; it was actually SpeechNow.org v. Federal Election Commission that allowed for the “Super” to be added on to “PAC”. It took away the contribution limit for individuals to PACs, thereby allowing for ‘unlimited donations’, including those from corporations and unions.

Myth 3

Corporations are the main source of donations for SuperPACs

In reality, the facts completely contradict this.

The Truth: The majority of funding for SuperPACs comes from a small group of privately wealthy individuals.

Data compiled by OpenSecrets.org (based upon financial disclosures made by SuperPACs to the Federal Elections Commission) reveals that, “The top 100 individual donors to super PACs, along with their spouses, represent ... 73% of the money they delivered.” That’s right, individual people constitute the majority of donations to SuperPACs – not corporations.

Frankly, the connection between money and politics is obvious. In the “land of the free”, you’ve got to ‘pay to play’ – and the price isn’t getting cheaper anytime soon. However, as you can see, a lot of the things we ‘think’ we know about money in politics – we actually don’t.

WHERE TO GO FOR LAUGHS

WHEN POLITICS MAKE YOU WANT TO CRY

Late Night Talk Shows

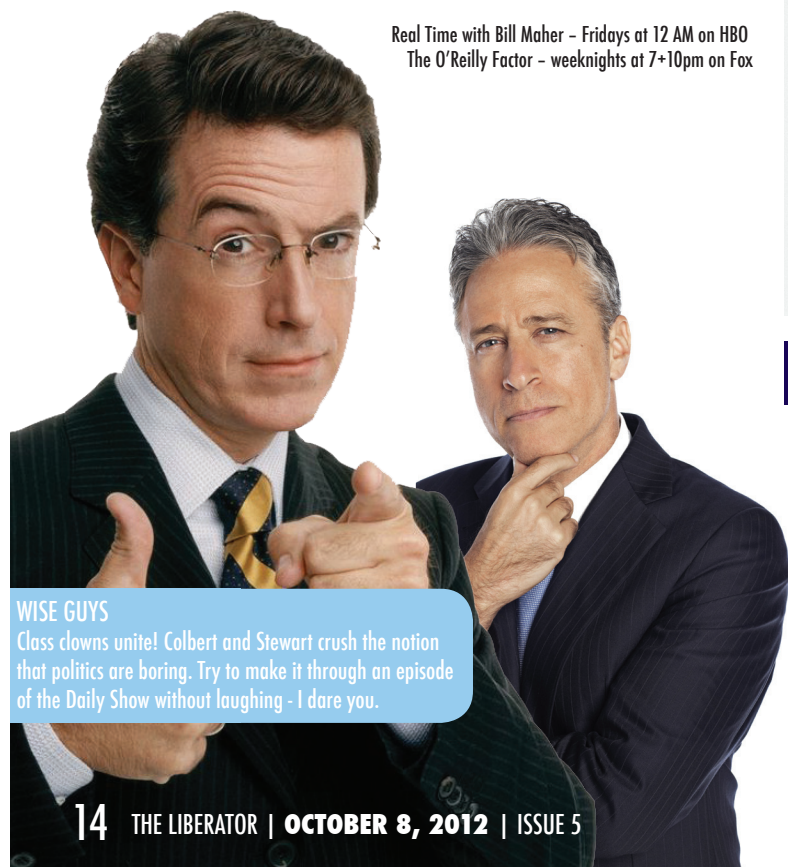
For those of you that appreciate more reserved, politically correct laughs, like to seem a little more grown-up, and want to be able to reference shows to your boss or mom and younger brother, don't worry, there's something for you, too! Check out late night talk shows on the local networks. Seasoned veteran, David Letterman, is sure to make some political puns and there will be at least one Top-10 List before November 6, and who doesn't love a Top-10 list? Don't like David Letterman? Check out the Jimmies—Fallon and Kimmel. There's also Conan and his predecessor/successor, Jay Leno. Regardless, you'll be sure to find something in the myriad of late night shows and that's the best part, these are late night. Don't worry about missing something while you're in class.

The Late Show with David Letterman - weeknights at 10:35pm CT on CBS
The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson - weeknights at 11:35pm CT on CBS
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno - weeknights at 10:35pm CT on NBC
Late Night with Jimmy Fallon - weeknights 11:35pm CT on NBC
Jimmy Kimmel Live! - weeknights at 11pm CT on ABC
Conan - weeknights at 10 on TBS

Polarized Talk Shows

If you're looking for biased opinions, and you don't care, lefties, check out Real Time with Bill Maher and righties, tune in to The O'Reilly Factor. But beware, these are not for the faint of heart. Not only can they be quite serious most of the time, but also be prepared for rash comments and political incorrectness.

Real Time with Bill Maher - Fridays at 12 AM on HBO
The O'Reilly Factor - weeknights at 7+10pm on Fox



WISE GUYS

Class clowns unite! Colbert and Stewart crush the notion that politics are boring. Try to make it through an episode of the Daily Show without laughing - I dare you.

14 THE LIBERATOR | OCTOBER 8, 2012 | ISSUE 5



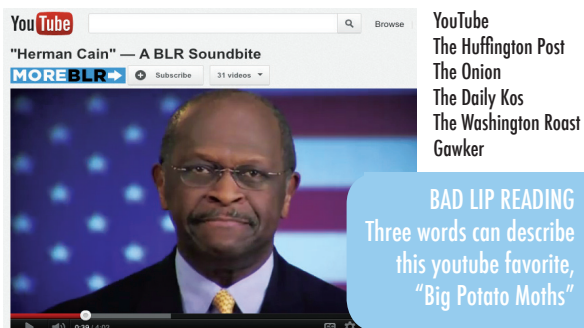
SKETCH ROYALTY

Let's be honest, Tina Fey was a better Sarah Palin than the Alaskan nominee herself



On Demand Laughs

You want political jokes and you want them now! Worry not! Head on over to YouTube and you will, quite literally, find an endless list of candidate and issue comedy and parody videos. If it's unanimated pictures you're looking for or you just want to read (because us Liberal Arts students can't get enough of that, right?), there are several options. Most major newspaper websites have political cartoons online and The Huffington Post even has an entire political humor page that features short videos and blog snippets. There are also a number of blogs, some serious, some not, trying to poke fun at politics, such as The Washington Roast, Gawker, and The Daily Kos, just to name a few. The beauty of YouTube, and the Internet in general, is that it allows you laugh about any election, any time you want. Want to re-watch that crazy campaign ad from 2004? Have no fear, YouTube is here! Downside, you have to have a general idea of what you're looking for, and search for it. Upside, you can do this to your heart's content whenever you feel like it. If all else fails, there's always The Onion.



YouTube

The Huffington Post
The Onion
The Daily Kos
The Washington Roast
Gawker

BAD LIP READING

Three words can describe this youtube favorite, "Big Potato Moths"



Comedy Sketch Shows

Looking for all sorts of laughs with some political ones in the mix? Don't have time to laugh on school nights or when you have to worry about that looming midterm the next day? Check out the age-old classic, Saturday Night Live on, you guessed it... Saturday nights. This weekly program features a celebrity host and various comedy sketches, most of which are relevant to current events, especially "Weekend Update". SNL alumni include Tina Fey, Will Ferrell, Amy Poehler, Seth Meyers, Eddie Murphy, Kristen Wiig, and many, many more; there's no way you can go wrong here. As an added bonus, you also get a musical guest that performs 2-3 songs over the course of the hour-long program. So sit back, relax, and chuckle.

Saturday Night Live - Saturdays at 10:30pm on NBC

Comedy Talk Shows

If you're looking for daily laughs about current campaign happenings, Comedy Central is your holy grail. Home to classic favorites The Daily Show with Jon Stewart and The Colbert Report, Comedy Central is your best bet for campaign laughs. In addition to the nightly political and current events satire (and it is current!), Comedy Central also hosts a lot of other shows that will feature comical campaign cracks, such as Key and Peele, South Park, as well as a wide variety of stand-up comics, from Aziz Ansari, to Louis Black and Chris Rock. But wait! There's more! Once again, Comedy Central has put together their network's dedicated coverage of election season festivities, known as Indecision 2012. In addition to coverage on various programs, check out www.indecisionforever.com for videos, a blog, and more.

■ DANA HENNING

The Daily Show with John Stewart, weeknights at 10
The Colbert Report, weeknights at 10:30

first ladies OF FASHION

For readers tired of the endless campaign commercials and headlines, there is a new battle to focus on this election season—a First Lady fashion face-off. While Michelle Obama has been winning the hearts of the fashion world since 2008, this fall she has a fierce competitor in Ann Romney, who has been showing her fashion prowess as well. These ladies have not only resurrected the image of a stylish first lady, last seen in Jackie Kennedy, but use their fashion choices to communicate their personalities and political platforms. At the recent Republican and Democratic national conventions, both ladies brought their A game.



Dressed in a bright red Oscar de la Renta cocktail dress, Ann Romney looked glamorous on stage at the Republican national convention. The dress's quarter-length sleeves and collar gave it a more formal, timeless look, while the belted waist and flared skirt added a retro feel. Black peep-toes completed the outfit, a more contemporary shoe than seen with recent Republican first ladies. Ann's dress was not without hints of Republican tradition, however. The red color was definitely appropriate for the occasion, emphasizing her alliance to the Republican Party and ideals, and the longer sleeves and classic fit likely appealed to more conservative viewers. Additionally, Oscar de la Renta has been a go-to designer for First Ladies in decades past, so one can expect her to continue such a tradition should Mitt Romney be elected. A downside of this designer choice is that Oscar de la Renta pieces usually retail for upwards of \$1000, a price not many Americans are able to pay for a dress. Likewise, with a Republican campaign focused on economic restructuring, perhaps a less expensive choice would have been better.

A few days later at the Democratic National Convention, Michelle Obama stepped on stage in a Tracy Reese cocktail dress. Straying from the traditional Democratic color of royal blue, the blush pink and light blue patterned dress was refreshing and unexpected. Also, the sleeveless option contrasted nicely with the rounded neckline and classic A-line fit, making it a risky, but still appropriate choice. The look was tied together with pink pointy-toed shoes but no accessories. Compared to her long sleeved turquoise dress at the 2008 convention, this dress is much more fashion-forward and displays how Obama's sense of style has blossomed during her time in Washington. Perhaps the best aspect of this Tracy Reese dress is that it shows off Obama's fabulous figure, including her famous toned arms. As an advocate for preventing childhood obesity and providing healthy school lunches, the choice of a sleeveless dress with no accessories parallels her campaign as well as displays her own athleticism. Also interesting was Mrs. Obama's choice in designer, as Tracy Reese dresses usually retail around \$300. This is a reasonable price for a nice dress, and a frugal First Lady is often applauded.



While Ann Romney dazzled on stage with her blonde locks and bright red dress, Michelle Obama took a fashion risk and stayed true to her own sense of style. Romney's classic red dress is a favorite of mine, and I believe more appropriate for a national convention than the Tracy Reese dress worn by Michelle Obama. That being said, I also believe the dress worn by Michelle Obama was a fashion forward choice that displayed more of her personality. In this fashion face-off I have to declare Michelle Obama the winner. As for who will win the Presidential election, we will find out in November.

■ BY EMILY YOUNG

CAN WE RELATE? ■ BY FARAH MITHANI

Kristin Stimpson, a graduate student studying Rhetoric and Language studies and instructor of the Professional Communication Skills course at UT, described the first ladies to be dressing with intention and specifically for an audience.

"A certain group can relate to Michelle Obama wearing J. Crew or other accessible brands as opposed to wearing more high-end clothing such as a Chanel suit. She represents a diversity in the designers she chooses and is conscious of these choices."



Michelle Obama

Tracy Reese, \$300

Ann Romney

Oscar de la Renta, \$1000

YOU KNOW
YOU'RE IN
LIBERAL ARTS
WHEN...

YOU'RE MORE EXCITED FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION THAN FOOTBALL

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
6:00 - 8:00 P.M.
MEZ 1.306



PRESENTED BY
SENATE
LIBERAL ARTS COUNCIL
PARTNERED WITH
THE NEW YORK TIMES





AA COMMITTEE HOSTS PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

During Liberal Arts Week last month, the Liberal Arts Council's Academic Affairs committee invited students from all colleges to attend a rousing and informative discussion centered on the current presidential race between incumbent Barack Obama and Governor Mitt Romney. Dr. James Henson, director of the Texas Politics Project, Dr. David Edwards, Government Professor and Harvard graduate, and Professor Bethany Albertson, assistant professor in the government department, were invited to speak. Dr. Edwards has written multiple books, including *The American Political Experience*; Professor Albertson's has researched the effect of religious appeals in American politics, and Dr. Henson investigates the political impact of the Internet and described this event as an opportunity to, "strike while the iron is hot."

INTERACTIVE DEBATE

During the event, students were asked to submit their questions via Twitter. Sonali Kalvala, a third-year government major and co-chair for the Academic Affairs committee, stated she was "proud" of the results Twitter yielded. Many questions such as "What is unique about the 2012 Presidential Election?" And "Do you think any candidate would seriously address

the national debt?" were posted online. Other topics addressed related to the impact of negative advertisements and how it affects voter enthusiasm. Albertson addressed this question by stating, "Campaigns continue to use attack campaigns, even though it demobilizes the electorate and discourages the election. Negative ad campaigns are effective though, and you remember those attack campaigns on Election Day." Voter turnout was also a hot topic. Dr. Henson mentioned, "There hasn't been a ton of movement, the number of persuadable voters is always much smaller in my mind than press says" but Dr. Edwards refuted this by saying, "If Latinos start turning out in elections, they will transform the elections in many states, not just Texas [but] nobody seems to know how to get Latinos to the polls, and that's the problem."

Kalvala and Academic Affairs co-chair, Amtul Batool, worked hard on this particular event through the summer, which speaks to the importance they placed on students engaging in election issues. Batool stated that the purpose in planning this event was, "to create something that would peak everyone's interest." Kalvala was especially pleased with the "good turnout." She was glad to see students' interests about foreign policy and the candidates were being addressed.

KEEPING STUDENTS INVOLVED

There were many students, outside of Liberal Arts Council, who attended and participated in the discussion. David Ayala, a sophomore, said he was "too busy with school and this would be a good way to keep up with what is currently going on." While junior, Katherine Leung, embraced the event as an opportunity to be a part of Liberal Arts Week. The general consensus of those that attended was that the discussion was very informative, and it was exciting to learn from professors who taught and researched these topics, but outside of the formal classroom. Morgan Caridi, senior and president of the Liberal Arts Council, was

very pleased with the turnout and thought the discussion was informative. Alycia Habib, sophomore economics major, summed up the impact of the evening by saying, "This event really helped put the upcoming election in perspective."

Although the event was discussing serious issues, there were many comical moments including Albertson's allusion to Mitt Romney's appearance on Saturday Night Live. She jokingly remarked about the overwhelming presence of one party in some states, but defended exercising the vote by saying, "I vote because it is my civic duty." This night closed with Tiff's Treats and a fiery crowd who was exposed to some issues to go home and chew on. ■ AISHA ALI



TWEET TWEET
Technology reigned
as government
professors Edwards,
Albertson and Henson
answered twitter
questions from the
audience

PHOTO BY KELLY DE MOYA

BEAT THE STRESS The Student Affairs committee, led by Alana Harrison and Supriya Misra, organized a de-stress event for all students in hopes of showcasing UT's mental health resources.

PHOTOS BY
MADHU SINGH

LIBERAL ARTS WEEK

YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN LIBERAL ARTS WHEN...

LA FOR 500 DOLLARS Liberal Arts student Stephen Michael Vincent participates in the New York Times Jeopardy, hosted by LAC's Traditions committee. Chairs Ali Raza and Landon Sparks aimed to unite the college's trivia buffs for a night of fun and factoids.

SAY CHEESE Liberal Arts Council member Katie McMurray poses for a photo to be displayed in the new Liberal Arts Building. Students and faculty finished the sentence "You Know You're in Liberal Arts When..."

The Liberal Arts Council hosts Liberal Arts Week every September in order to begin the academic calendar by displaying pride for our college. Our council aims to showcase various resources, highlight fields of study and engage the College's study body in current issues.

This year Liberal Arts Week's theme was "You Know You Are in Liberal Arts When..."

All seven of our committees hosted a variety of events. Since such an important election occurs next month, two of our

committees hosted events relating to the presidential race and how religion and the media are key deciding factors.

Other events included: Jeopardy with a New York Times representative covering current events. Registering students to vote, which council registered over 150 University students. A 'De-Stress' event that allowed our peers to blow off steam by beating on bongo drums and learning about the various mental health services available on campus. Also, taking pictures of students displaying their Liberal Arts'

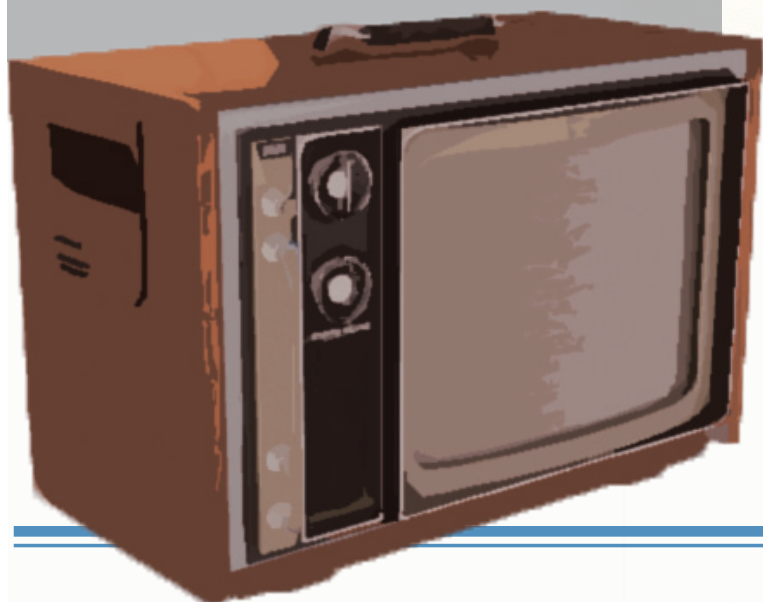
pride with the potential that the pictures taken will be featured in the new Liberal Arts building.

Our council's goal is to properly represent the student voice and connect students to the various resources on campus. Every year, we strive to positively increase our affect on our fellow Liberal Arts peers. We hope that all students who took part in the events enjoyed their experience and will also make an effort to attend the events in years to come.

■ BY LAC PRESIDENT MORGAN CARIDI

HOW TO

THROW AN ELECTION PARTY



PARTY PLAYLISTS

MITT'S PLAYLIST

Roy Orbison
The Beatles
The Eagles
Clint Black
Randy Travis
Johnny Cash

PAUL RYAN'S PLAYLIST

ACDC
Led Zeppelin
Grateful Dead
Metallica
Beethoven
Hank Williams Jr.

OBAMA'S PLAYLIST

Miles Davis
John Coltrane
Bob Dylan
Stevie Wonder
Bach Cello Suites

MICHELLE'S PLAYLIST

Sting
Jazz
Beyonce

FAMOUS COUPLES IN POLITICS

Have each guest put one of these slips on their forehead (without seeing who they are). Mingle with everyone else, asking questions about your person. The first two to find their match win the game!

BILL CLINTON

HILLARY CLINTON

MONICA LEWINSKY

BARACK OBAMA

MICHELLE OBAMA

MITT ROMNEY

ANN ROMNEY

GEORGE BUSH

BARBARA BUSH

AL GORE

FLORIDA

HERMAIN CAIN

PIZZA

SARAH PALIN

ALASKA

ELECTION DAY DRINKING GAME

DRINK ONCE
DRINK TWICE



RED PUNCH

1.5 oz. Malibu Rum
2 oz. Cranberry Juice
2 oz. Pineapple Juice



BLUE PUNCH

1.25 oz. Vodka
0.5 oz. Blue Curacao
2 oz. Sour Mix
1 splash 7-up

ELECTION MOVIES for after the ballots are in

COMEDY

ELECTION

STARRING: REESE WITHERSPOON

A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER GETS A FOOTBALL PLAYER TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT AGAINST THE UNCONTESTED TRACY FLICK, WITH WHOM THE TEACHER HAS PERSONAL ISSUES.

DRAMA

IDES OF MARCH

STARRING: GEORGE CLOONEY

AN IDEALIST WHO IS BRILLIANT AT COMMUNICATIONS AND ON THE STAFF OF A CAMPAIGN, FINDS HIMSELF GETTING A CRASH COURSE IN DIRTY POLITICS

MADE FOR TV

RECOUNT

STARRING: KEVIN SPACEY

A DRAMATIC REENACTMENT OF THE EVENTS THAT HAPPENED DURING THE 2000 ELECTIONS AND THE SUBSEQUENT RECOUNT THAT OCCURRED IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

DOCUMENTARY

SICKO

DIRECTED BY: MICHAEL MOORE

A DOCUMENTARY LOOK AT HEALTH MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE U.S. COMPARED TO FREE HEALTH CARE OFFERED IN OTHER COUNTRIES

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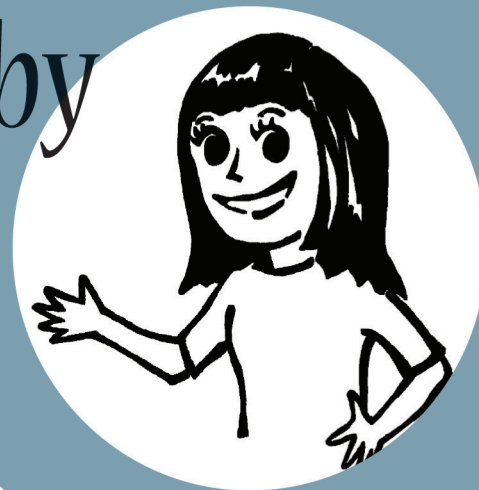


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FALL
2012

CAREER & INTERNSHIP FAIR

SXSW
LIVESTRONG
National Security Agency
National Instruments
Spencer Ogden
Office of the Governor - TX
Morgan Stanley
JET Program
Equal Justice Center
Gerson Lehrman Group
Peace Corps
Frost & Sullivan
DHL Express
Goodwill Industries
And More...

October 17 ▸ 11 a - 3 p
Texas Union Ballroom

JOBS & INTERNSHIPS

Professional Attire Required

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